

Sussex County Landfill No. 5

Site Name

EPA Region 3

Delaware

Sussex County

Laurel

EPA ID# DED980494637 **Last Update:** August 2002

1st Congressional District **Other Names:** None

Current Site Status

EPA issued a No Action Record of Decision (ROD) in December 1994 that documented the low levels of contamination at the Site which resulted in no cleanup action. Based on the 1999 Five-Year Review results and the current levels of contamination, the Site was deleted from the National Priorities List (NPL) on September 28, 2001.

Sussex County continues to monitor ground water, among other requirements, on a semi-annual basis.

Site Description

The inactive 37 ½-acre Sussex County Landfill No. 5, located in Laurel, Sussex County, Delaware (1st Congressional District) was operated by Sussex County from 1970 until 1979. The landfill accepted mixed municipal and industrial wastes and, according to a 1978 Congressional report, an unknown quantity of various volatile organic compounds (VOCs). In certain areas of the landfill, wastes were deposited in the ground below the water table, threatening

groundwater. During 1992, Sussex County conducted an investigation at the site which included the installation of several additional monitoring wells and sampling of ground water, surface water, air, soil, and sediments. This investigation confirmed that the ground water is contaminated primarily with very low levels of VOCs (e.g., benzene and vinyl chloride) and that ground water is the primary concern at this site.

One domestic well to the north of the landfill was found to be contaminated with low levels of VOCs. Sussex County provided this residence with bottled water and a water purification system to alleviate the risk presented by the contaminated water supply. All other residential wells in the area which have been sampled during investigations at the site have not shown contamination at levels of concern. The landfill overlies the Columbia Formation, which is connected to and recharges the Manokin Aquifer. Together, the two aquifers provide drinking water to people within 3 miles of the site. Public and private wells within 3 miles of the site provide drinking water to an estimated 5,700 people and irrigate 5,100 acres of cropland.

The Human Health Risk Assessment conducted by EPA determined that current and potential future risk levels posed by the very low levels of VOCs in the ground water are within or marginally above EPA's generally acceptable risk range. In addition, the DNREC and Sussex County entered into a Notice of Conciliation in 1994 pursuant to which the County will install a water line to supply residents downgradient of the landfill with public water, continue ground water monitoring, and maintain the cover on the landfill.

Site Responsibility


This site was the responsibility of Federal, State, and county governments, the site owner and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.

NPL Listing History

This site was proposed to the National Priorities List of the most serious uncontrolled or abandoned hazardous waste sites requiring long term remedial action on June 24, 1988. The site was formally added to the list October 4, 1989 making it eligible for federal cleanup funds.

Threats and Contaminants

Several ground water monitoring wells have shown contamination from VOCs, including benzene and vinyl chloride. Possible health threats include drinking or coming in direct contact with the contaminated ground water. One domestic well to the north of the landfill was found to be contaminated with low levels of VOCs. Sussex County provided this residence with bottled water and a water purification system to alleviate the risk presented by the contained water supply. No other residential wells in the area which have been sampled during investigations at the site have shown contamination at levels of concern.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html> 

Cleanup Progress

Because of the low levels of contamination and the correspondingly low risk levels, and in light of the Notice of Conciliation, EPA issued a No Action Record of Decision (ROD) in December 1994. Sussex County completed the water line construction in September 1995. Nearly all residences have been connected to the water line and domestic wells have been closed. The County continues to monitor ground water on a semiannual basis and has filled in depressions on the cover of the landfill to promote proper drainage.

Contacts

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The detailed Administrative Record can be examined at the following locations:

Laurel Public Library

6 E. Fourth Street

Laurel, DE 19956

302875-3184

U.S. EPA Region 3

Public Reading Room

1650 Arch Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

215-814-3157